



Senate

General Assembly

January Session, 2009

File No. 408

Senate Bill No. 947

Senate, April 2, 2009

The Committee on Education reported through SEN. GAFFEY of the 13th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT FOR APPROVED ONLINE COURSEWORK.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-221a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2009*):

3 (a) For classes graduating from 1988 to 2003, inclusive, no local or
4 regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from
5 high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not
6 satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty credits, not fewer than
7 four of which shall be in English, not fewer than three in mathematics,
8 not fewer than three in social studies, not fewer than two in science,
9 not fewer than one in the arts or vocational education and not fewer
10 than one in physical education.

11 (b) Commencing with classes graduating in 2004, and for each
12 graduating class thereafter, no local or regional board of education
13 shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a

14 diploma to any student who has not satisfactorily completed a
15 minimum of twenty credits, not fewer than four of which shall be in
16 English, not fewer than three in mathematics, not fewer than three in
17 social studies, including at least a one-half credit course on civics and
18 American government, not fewer than two in science, not fewer than
19 one in the arts or vocational education and not fewer than one in
20 physical education.

21 (c) Any student who presents a certificate from a physician stating
22 that, in the opinion of the physician, participation in physical
23 education is medically contraindicated because of the physical
24 condition of such student, shall be excused from the physical
25 education requirement, provided the credit for physical education may
26 be fulfilled by an elective.

27 (d) Determination of eligible credits shall be at the discretion of the
28 local or regional board of education, provided the primary focus of the
29 curriculum of eligible credits corresponds directly to the subject matter
30 of the specified course requirements. The local or regional board of
31 education may permit a student to graduate during a period of
32 expulsion pursuant to section 10-233d, if the board determines the
33 student has satisfactorily completed the necessary credits pursuant to
34 this section. The requirements of this section shall apply to any student
35 requiring special education pursuant to section 10-76a, except when
36 the planning and placement team for such student determines the
37 requirement not to be appropriate. For purposes of this section, a
38 credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of a forty-minute
39 class period for each school day of a school year except for a credit or
40 part of a credit toward high school graduation earned (1) at an
41 institution accredited by the Department of Higher Education or
42 regionally accredited, or (2) through online coursework that is in
43 accordance with a policy adopted pursuant to subsection (e) of this
44 section.

45 (e) Only courses taken in grades nine through twelve, inclusive,
46 shall satisfy this graduation requirement, except that a local or regional

47 board of education may grant a student credit (1) toward meeting a
48 specified course requirement upon the successful completion in grade
49 seven or eight of any course, the primary focus of which corresponds
50 directly to the subject matter of a specified course requirement in
51 grades nine to twelve, inclusive; (2) toward meeting the high school
52 graduation requirement upon completion of a world language course
53 offered privately through a nonprofit provider, provided such student
54 achieves a passing grade on an examination prescribed, within
55 available appropriations, by the Commissioner of Education and such
56 credits do not exceed four; (3) toward meeting the high school
57 graduation requirement upon achievement of a passing grade on a
58 subject area proficiency examination identified and approved, within
59 available appropriations, by the Commissioner of Education,
60 regardless of the number of hours the student spent in a public school
61 classroom learning such subject matter; [or] (4) toward meeting the
62 high school graduation requirement upon the successful completion of
63 coursework at an institution accredited by the Department of Higher
64 Education or regionally accredited. One three-credit semester course,
65 or its equivalent, at such an institution shall equal one-half credit for
66 purposes of this section; or (5) toward meeting the high school
67 graduation requirement upon the successful completion of online
68 coursework provided the local or regional board of education has
69 adopted a policy in accordance with this subdivision for the granting
70 of credit for online coursework. Such a policy shall ensure, at a
71 minimum, that (A) the workload required by the online course is
72 equivalent to that of a similar course taught in a traditional classroom
73 setting; (B) the content is rigorous and aligned with curriculum
74 guidelines approved by the State Board of Education, where
75 appropriate; (C) the course engages students and has interactive
76 components, which may include, but are not limited to, required
77 interactions between students and their teachers, participation in
78 online demonstrations, discussion boards or virtual labs; and (D) the
79 courses are (i) taught by teachers who are certified in Connecticut or
80 another state and have received training on teaching in an online
81 environment, or (ii) offered by institutions of higher education that are

82 accredited by the Department of Higher Education or regionally
83 accredited.

84 (f) A local or regional board of education may offer one-half credit
85 in community service which, if satisfactorily completed, shall qualify
86 for high school graduation credit pursuant to this section, provided
87 such community service is supervised by a certified school
88 administrator or teacher and consists of not less than fifty hours of
89 actual service that may be performed at times when school is not
90 regularly in session and not less than ten hours of related classroom
91 instruction. For purposes of this section, community service does not
92 include partisan political activities. The State Board of Education shall
93 assist local and regional boards of education in meeting the
94 requirements of this section.

95 (g) A local or regional board of education may award a diploma to a
96 veteran of World War II, pursuant to section 27-103, who left high
97 school prior to graduation in order to serve in the armed forces of the
98 United States and did not receive a diploma as a consequence of such
99 service.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2009	10-221a

ED *Joint Favorable*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which allows boards of education to grant credit towards meeting the high school graduation requirement for the successful completions of online coursework, is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 947*****AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT FOR APPROVED
ONLINE COURSEWORK.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill allows boards of education to grant credit towards meeting the high school graduation requirement for the successful completion of online coursework. Boards can do this if they have adopted a policy that, at least, ensures that:

1. the workload required by the online course is equivalent to that of a similar course taught in a traditional classroom setting;
2. the content is rigorous and aligned with curriculum guidelines approved by the State Board of Education, where appropriate;
3. the course engages students and has interactive components, such as required interactions between students and teachers, participation in online demonstrations, discussion boards, or virtual labs; and
4. the courses are (a) taught by certified (by any state) teachers who have received training on teaching in an online environment, or (b) offered by higher education institutions that are regionally or Department of Higher Education accredited.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2009

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 31 Nay 0 (03/16/2009)

